



Matador Miguel Angel Perera fights a bull in Seville, Spain. (Marcelo del Pozo / Reuters / Corbis)

## Ban on Bullfighting

A region in Spain outlaws a national tradition

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Thousands of people protest against bullfighting in Spain (Daniel Ochoa de Olza / AP Images); map of Catalonia, Spain. (Jim McMahon)

Bullfighting has been going on in Spain for centuries. But that may not be the case for much longer. Catalonia recently became the first region in mainland Spain to ban the practice. (Spain's Canary Islands outlawed it in 1991.)

Catalonia is often thought to be the birthplace of bullfighting. It's the home of the country's first bullfighting clubs and some of its most famous **matadors**—bullfighters, who perform a series of graceful movements before killing a bull with swords.

Many people think bullfighting is cruel and that the whole country should outlaw it. Spaniards also aren't as interested in bullfighting as they used to be. Since 2007, the number of bullfights in Spain has dropped by one third.

"This is a historic day for all those who have worked to promote animal rights in a modern society like ours," said Spanish animal-rights leader José Ramón Mallén after Catalonia's vote. "It's simply wrong to enjoy watching an animal getting killed in public."

Still, bullfighting is the topic of much debate. Many people object to the ban. They consider the sport to be an art form and an important part of Spanish culture, particularly in Catalonia. It's also a tradition in other nations, including Mexico.

What do you think? Should countries ban bullfighting? [Click here to vote in Scholastic News Online's poll.](#)

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